



# News Release

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## **Water Management Monthly News Release**

OMAHA – Persistent drought conditions throughout the Missouri River basin and below-normal snow accumulation means lower reservoir levels and reduced flows again this year.

“January’s runoff was only 59 percent of normal. As of Feb. 3, the mountain snowpack was 99 percent of normal in the reach above Fort Peck, and 86 percent of normal in the reach from Fort Peck to Garrison,” said Brig. Gen. William Grisoli, Northwestern Division Engineer. Normally, 60 percent of the peak snow in the mountains is accumulated by early February.

“With slightly below normal mountain snow and normal precipitation the rest of the year, we are forecasting annual runoff to be 19.5 million acre feet (MAF),” said General Grisoli. “It’s likely that dry soil conditions and low groundwater levels will reduce the runoff this year.” Normal runoff is 25.2 MAF

Support for the 2004 navigation season will begin April 1 at the mouth near St. Louis. River flows will be at minimum service levels.

System storage ended January at 38.2 MAF. A year ago it was 42.3 MAF. “System storage is nearly 17 MAF below average for this time of year,” said General Grisoli.

Releases from Gavins Point averaged 16,100 cubic feet per second (cfs) in January. They ranged from 14,000 cfs to 18,000 cfs based on weather and river ice conditions. “We will continue to monitor weather and river conditions to assure adequate water supply along the river, while setting releases as low as possible to conserve water in the reservoirs,” said Grisoli.

Lewis and Clark Lake is currently near elevation 1206 feet above mean sea level (msl). It will remain at that elevation through the month.

Fort Randall releases averaged 14,600 cfs in January. In February, they will range from 10,000 to 16,000 cfs as needed to maintain Lewis and Clark Lake near its desired elevation. Lake Francis Case ended January at 1343.8 feet msl. It will continue to refill, ending the month near 1350 feet msl.

Lake Oahe rose slightly during January, ending the month at elevation 1577.6 feet. It will rise one foot in February, ending the month 24 feet below normal. The reservoir is 8 feet lower than last year at this time.

Garrison releases averaged 19,200 cfs during January. They were increased from 17,000 cfs to 22,000 cfs during the month. Releases will gradually increase to 24,000 cfs, if river ice conditions permit, for power generation and to balance storage in the three biggest reservoirs. Lake Sakakawea fell more than two feet in January ending the month at elevation 1816.7 feet msl. It will drop nearly three feet in February, surpassing its previous record low of 1815.0 about mid-month. It will end the month 20 feet below normal. The reservoir is 4 feet lower than last year at this time.

Fort Peck releases averaged 8,900 cfs in January and will remain at 9,000 cfs in February. The reservoir fell more than one foot, ending the month at elevation 2205.3 feet. It will fall more than a foot in February, ending the month 27 feet below normal. Last year at this time it was 7 feet higher.

The six main stem powerplants generated 538 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity in January, 71 percent of normal. The forecast for 2004 energy production is 6.8 billion kWh compared to a normal of 10 billion kWh.

**Daily and forecasted reservoir and river information is available on the water management section of the Northwestern Division homepage at [www.nwd.usace.army.mil](http://www.nwd.usace.army.mil).**

MISSOURI RIVER MAIN STEM RESERVOIR DATA

	Pool Elevation (ft msl)		Water in Storage - 1,000 acre-feet		
	On Jan 31	Change in Jan	On Jan 31	% of 1967-2003 Average	Change in Jan
Fort Peck	2205.3	-1.2	9,806	67	-243
Garrison	1816.7	-2.4	12,446	71	-435
Oahe	1577.6	+0.6	11,204	65	+155
Big Bend	1420.6	+0.3	1,718	99	+13
Fort Randall	1343.8	+0.4	2,669	87	+26
Gavins Point	1205.8	-1.6	352	82	-43
			38,195	71	-527

WATER RELEASES AND ENERGY GENERATION FOR JANUARY

	Average Release in 1,000 cfs	Releases in 1,000 af	Generation in 1,000 MWh
Fort Peck	8.9	548	79
Garrison	19.2	1181	156
Oahe	15.4	946	118
Big Bend	13.9	854	53
Fort Randall	14.6	896	88
Gavins Point	16.1	990	45
			538